III. Summary of ADP Gap Analysis: Kentucky

Following is a summary of ADP's content analysis of Kentucky's high school assessments, as well as the alignment study of Kentucky standards, assessments and the expectations delineated by Kentucky's K –12 and postsecondary faculty.

English Language Arts

- Kentucky's high school standards for reading and writing (the Kentucky Core Content for Reading and Writing Assessment) do not contain all of the essential content identified as necessary by postsecondary faculty for success.
- The Kentucky Core Content for Reading and Writing Assessment standards must be more precise in order to reflect postsecondary expectations for incoming students.
- Kentucky's high school assessment (Kentucky Core Content Test, or "KCCT") of reading is administered in grade 10, too early for it to provide adequate information about a student's knowledge and skills to institutions of postsecondary institutions for the purposes of admission and/or placement.
- Kentucky's high school assessment (Kentucky Core Content Test, or "KCCT") of reading is not of sufficient cognitive challenge to be useful to postsecondary institutions or employers.
- The current KCCT of Writing – complete with its strong scoring rubric – could easily become an indicator of college readiness. A strong showing on the on-demand writing assessment could serve as an excellent means of validating the quality of students' writing in their portfolios.

Mathematics

- Kentucky's high school standards for mathematics (the Kentucky Core Content for Mathematics Assessment) contain most of the content needed for non-math-dependent fields, but fall short of covering what students need to know to be prepared for math majors or math-dependent majors in college.
- Although the high school mathematics assessment is administered in grade 11, the reviewers stated that the assessment could not work as a diagnostic of progress towards college readiness unless a significant number of Algebra II items were added to the assessment.
- The reviewers found that Kentucky's high school assessment for mathematics does not include enough algebra to be an adequate test of preparation for college level work. Despite this, it still tests for a higher level of mathematics than is found in the minimum curriculum required for high school graduation. The result is that students are tested on material they are not taught, and what they are tested on lacks sufficient depth in algebra.

Where all three content areas are concerned, in order for data from the KCCTs to be useful to postsecondary institutions for admissions and/or placement, the assessments would have to generate individual student scores and performance would need to be reported by domain as well as by item type. In other words, postsecondary faculty would like to see score reports that tell them more specifically which content students have or haven't mastered; they would also like to know how students performed on various kinds of test items.